

contenance our partner in the democratic process, the press. We continue to contenance their missing the real murders, the real offenses, the things that really do need to be told and are not told. I oppose the Hoagland amendment.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Higgins. The Chair would first like to announce that we have more student guests in our south balcony this morning, fifty 4th Grade students from Morton Elementary School at Millard, Nebraska and they are guests of Senator Witala, the Fearless Finn. Welcome to the Legislature. Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I originally thought that the purpose of this bill was to keep track of senators and how much they were spending. I just learned last week and I haven't had a chance to check it, maybe the press would like to check it out, but in going over my telephone bill, there were an awful lot of ten cent charges. Now I couldn't recall making phone calls where you could only talk when we are figuring twelve cents a minute on the WATTS line, that many calls that we are being charged ten cents for. And then someone told me, well, the telephone company, if you call someone and it rings over three or four times and there is no answer, and you hang up, the telephone company charges the state ten cents for a call that wasn't completed. I wish the press would check that out because I think that is a rip off of the taxpayers. Businesses don't pay it. Residences don't pay it. So now maybe there is a story for the press checking out and seeing if the telephone company is indeed charging the taxpayers for calls that senators make that are not completed. As I say, I have not had a chance yet to check this out. I have no objection and never have to letting the press know how much money I cost the state in calls each month, but I will tell you this, after the guards were stabbed out at the State Penitentiary, Marge Higgins paid \$170 in long distance calls because I had told any of them that I talked to the conversation would be completely confidential and I knew that if I made the calls on the WATTS line, it could be traced to people I had called who had worked at the Penitentiary. Now I think they had a right to confidentiality when I promised it to them. The same thing happens on nursing home people that call me. I will call them back at my own expense so that it could not be traced who it was that called and informed Senator Higgins about something going on. That is where I think the confidentiality really lies. I want to protect those people whom I have promised I absolutely will not divulge